



Belle

and the Perfect Pearl



A Disney
STORYBOOK





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“What do you suppose is behind these doors, Chip?”

Belle asked the enchanted teacup.

“Books!” Chip replied.

Belle laughed. “I mean what kind of books, silly.”





Belle threw open the doors. “I knew it. More beautiful adventures—tucked away and forgotten, maybe even unread!” she said.

It wasn't that the Beast didn't use the library. But when he did, he always read the same book.

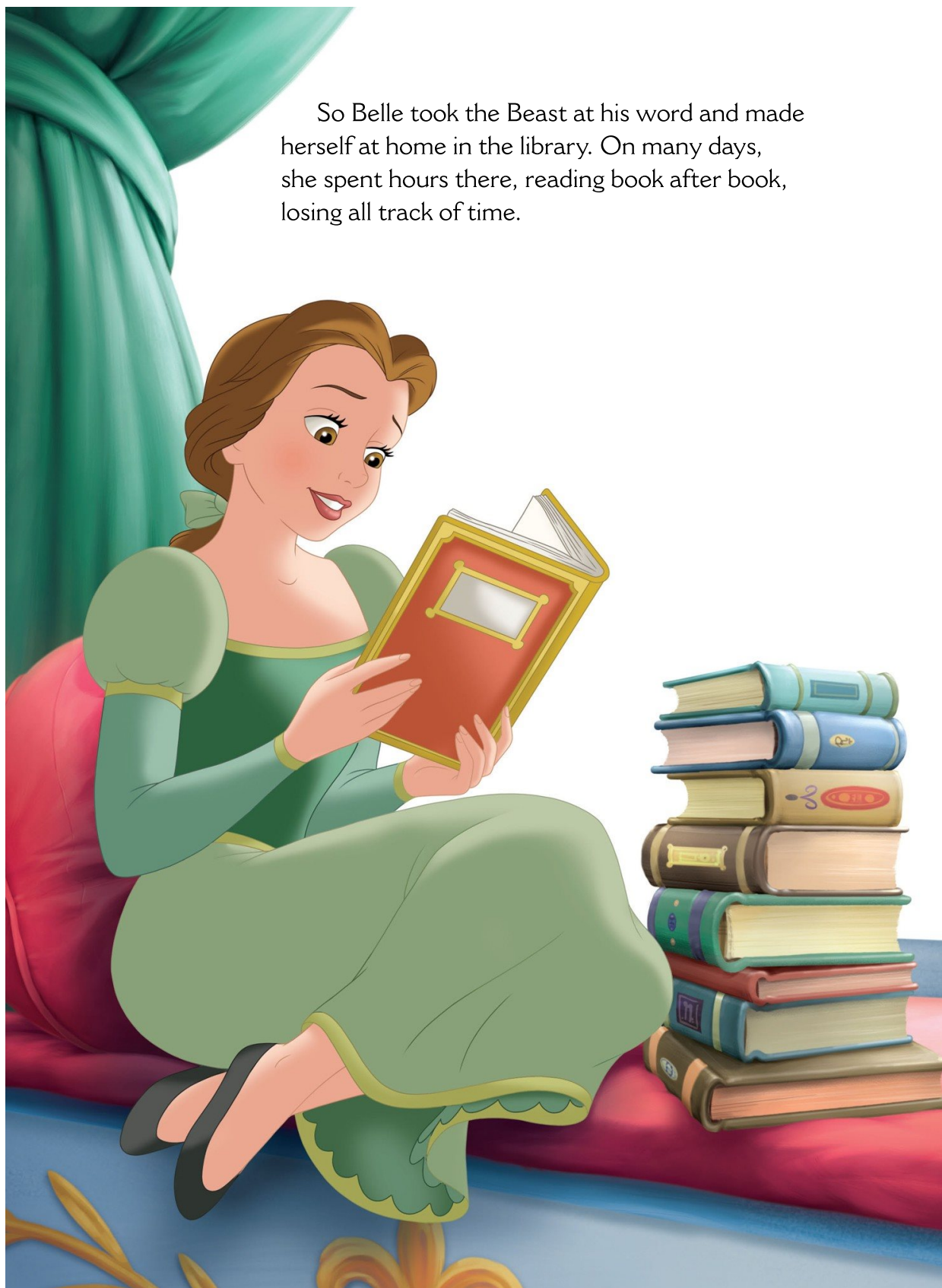




“My library is your library,” he liked to remind Belle. “Read and enjoy any book you find.”

It hadn't been long since Belle had agreed to stay at the castle in return for her father's freedom. But each day she was getting to know the Beast better. She was starting to think that he actually cared about her happiness.

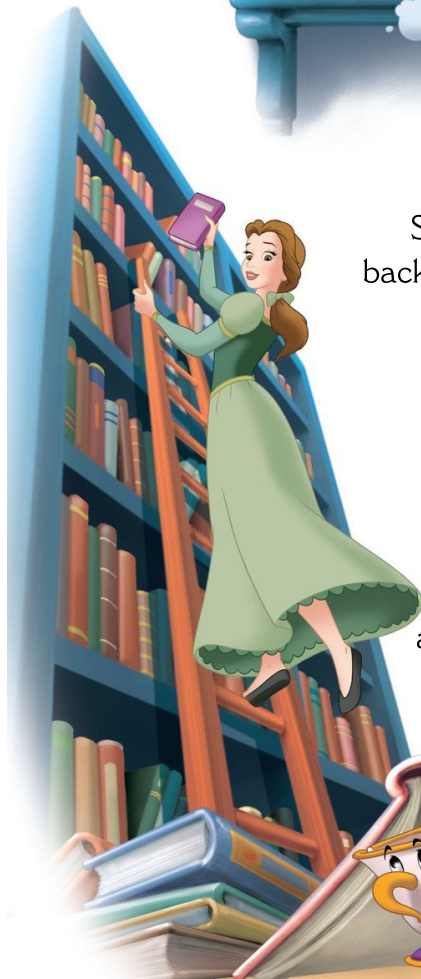
So Belle took the Beast at his word and made herself at home in the library. On many days, she spent hours there, reading book after book, losing all track of time.



Belle considered books priceless treasures. So when she took a break from reading, she gave the books special attention. Belle asked Featherduster to help her dust them.



She placed fallen books back on the shelves.



She pressed flat any folded pages.





One morning, Belle noticed the Beast had left his favorite book lying open on the arm of his chair. “That’s not good for the binding,” Belle said.



She picked up the book, closed it, then turned it over in her hands. Although the leather cover was worn, it was a beautiful volume with decorative gems on its brass clasp.

“Chip, look!” she said, pointing at the pearls. There was an empty hole where a fourth one should be.

Hmmm, thought Belle. How long has it been missing?



Belle looked around on the floor, in case it had fallen out just then.

Chip helped her search. "I found something!" he called. There by the library door was a single, perfect pearl.

"Let's see if it fits!" Belle suggested.



She dropped the pearl
into the hole in the clasp.
“Just right!” said Chip.



But the pearl was loose and wouldn't stay put.

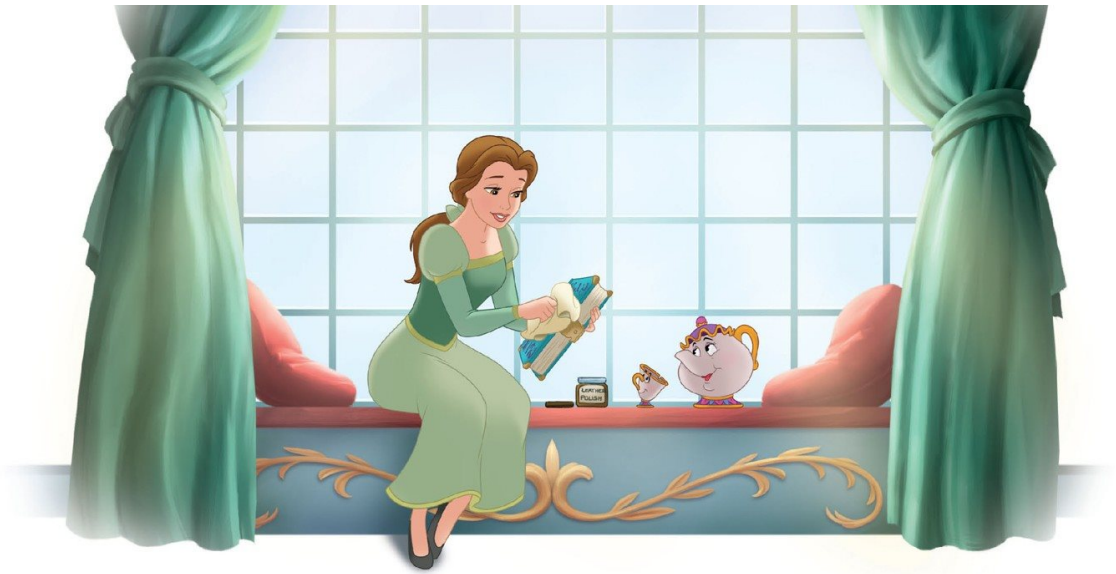
"I have an idea," Belle said. "This book is obviously your master's favorite. I'll fix it up a bit at a time. As the finishing touch, I'll reattach the pearl."

"Then you can surprise him!" Chip cried.

Belle nodded. She was happy to do something nice for the Beast.







Belle got right to work. She borrowed some rags and polish from Mrs. Potts and gently cleaned the leather cover. Then she put the book back on the Beast's chair so he wouldn't miss it.



But when the Beast came into the library, he didn't pick up his book. He seemed to be looking for something.

"Can I help?" Belle asked.

"NO!" he bellowed. Then, more quietly, he added, "I mean, no. Excuse me." Without another word, he left the room.

Belle was startled but shrugged it off, assuming the Beast's bad mood would pass.





That afternoon, Belle did some more work on the book. Carefully, she smoothed out rumpled pages and polished the brass clasp.

"I can see myself!" Chip said.

Again, Belle put the book back in its place on the Beast's chair.

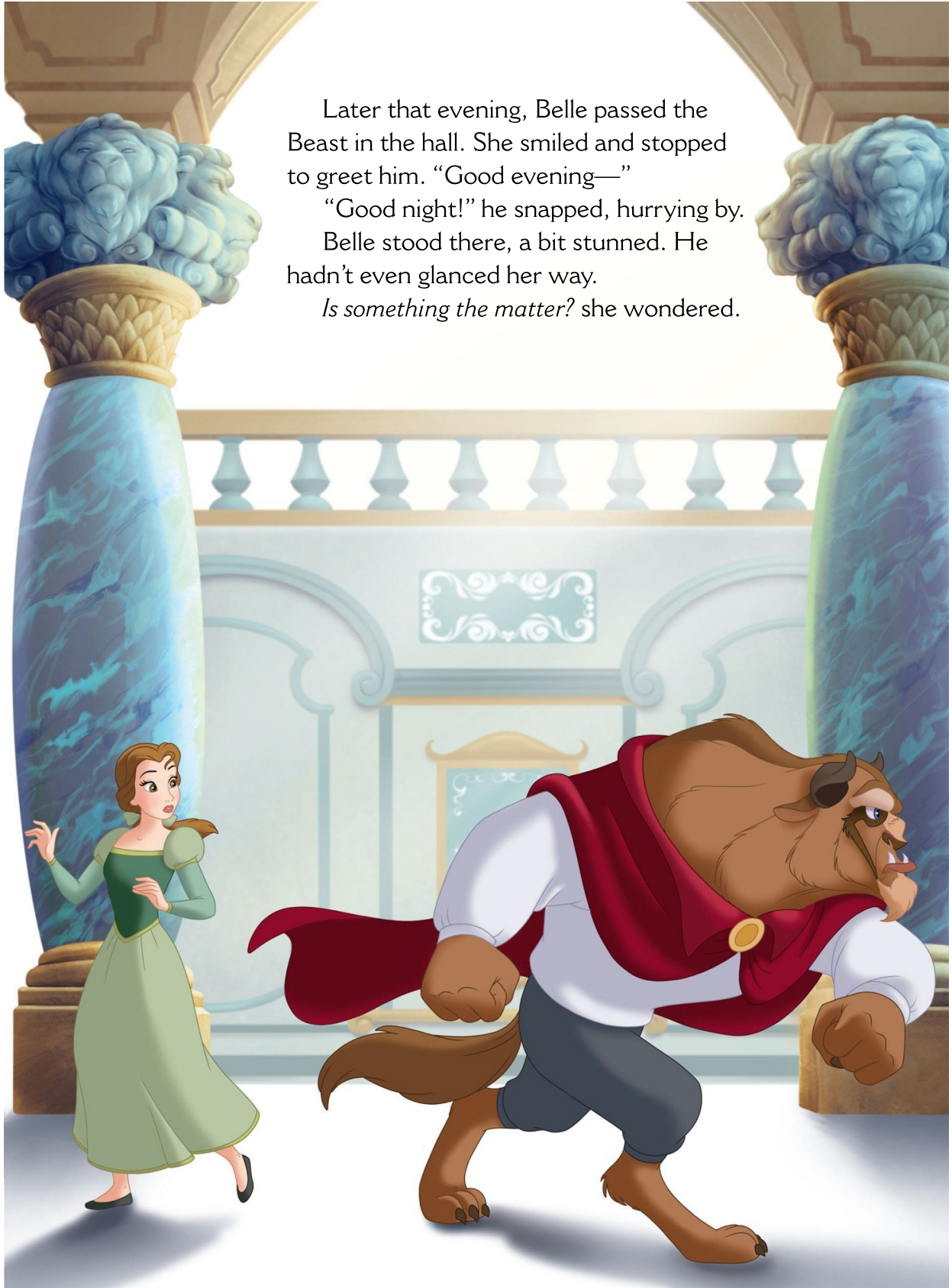


Later that evening, Belle passed the Beast in the hall. She smiled and stopped to greet him. "Good evening—"

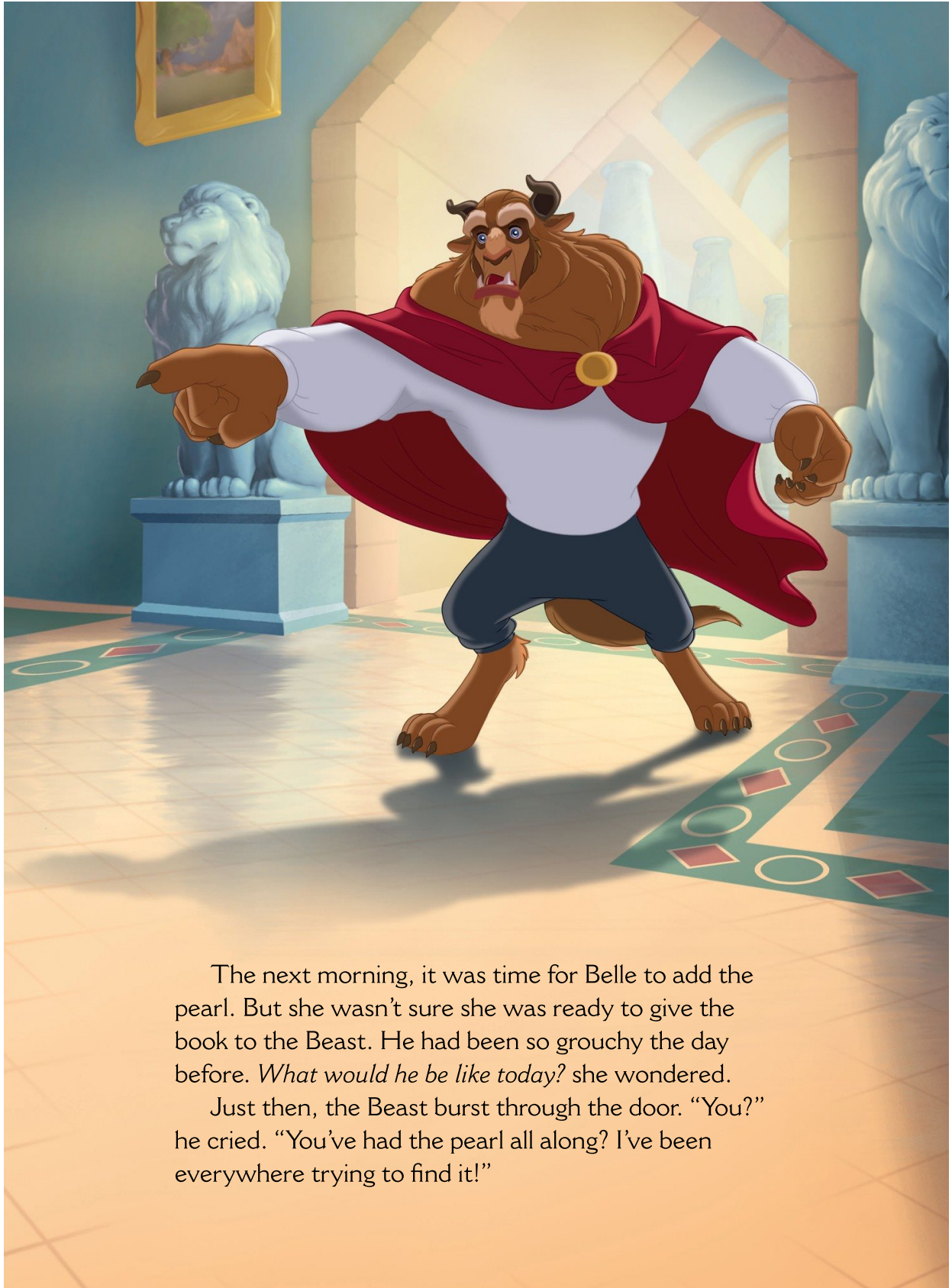
"Good night!" he snapped, hurrying by.

Belle stood there, a bit stunned. He hadn't even glanced her way.

Is something the matter? she wondered.



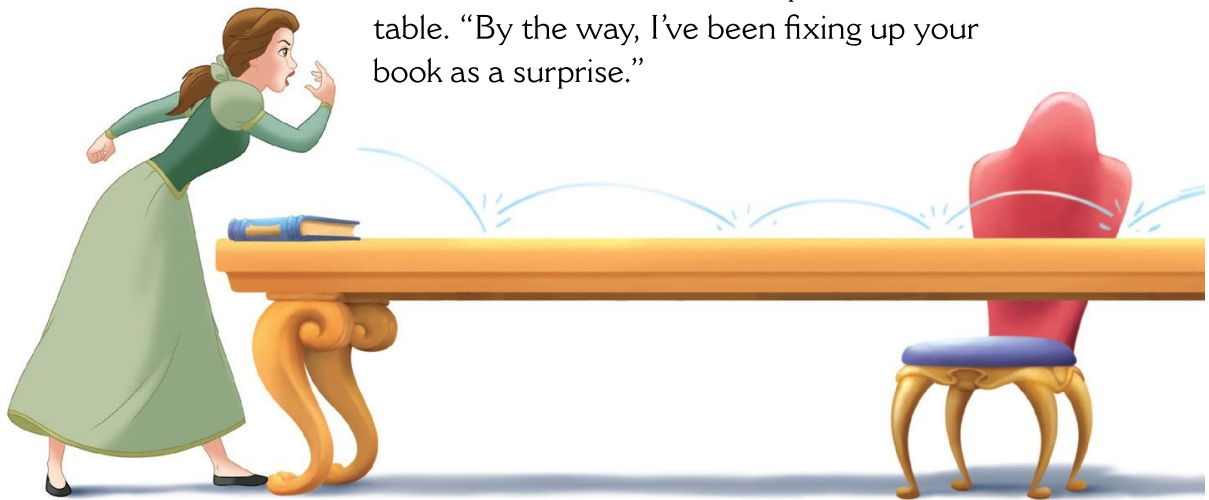




The next morning, it was time for Belle to add the pearl. But she wasn't sure she was ready to give the book to the Beast. He had been so grouchy the day before. *What would he be like today?* she wondered.

Just then, the Beast burst through the door. "You?" he cried. "You've had the pearl all along? I've been everywhere trying to find it!"

“Well, why didn’t you say so!” Belle shouted, then she tossed the pearl onto the table. “By the way, I’ve been fixing up your book as a surprise.”





The Beast was shocked. He looked at the book. He picked up the pearl. Then he smiled—and began to laugh.

Belle stormed toward the door.



“Belle, wait,” the Beast said. His gentle voice made Belle stop and turn. “I’ve been working on something for you, too.”



In the Beast’s hand was a lovely antique pin.
“It’s been in my family a long time,” he explained. “I wanted you to have it. But first, I had something to add.”

He placed the pearl on the pin, at the base of the rose. It fit perfectly.



“I removed the pearl from my book yesterday,” he said. “But I must have dropped it on my way out and—” He looked down. “I’m sorry I blamed you.”

Now it was Belle’s turn to laugh. “Well, I’m sorry I stole your surprise.”



Belle pinned the gold rose with the perfect pearl to her dress. Then she watched as the Beast noticed his book's shining brass clasp, polished cover, and smooth pages.

"Thank you, Belle," he said. "You've made it new."

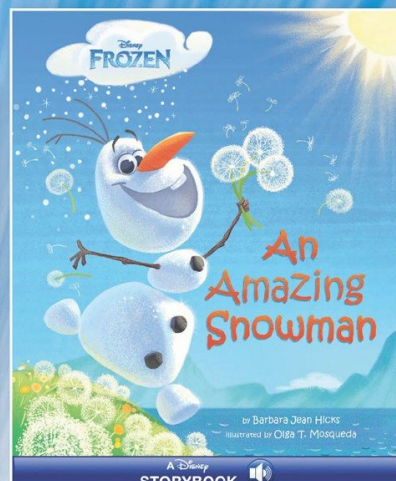
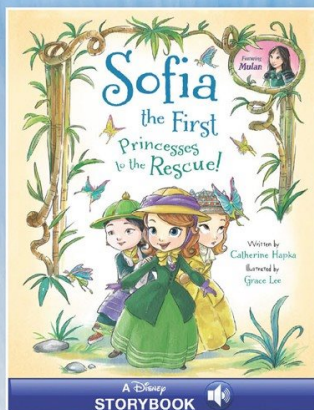
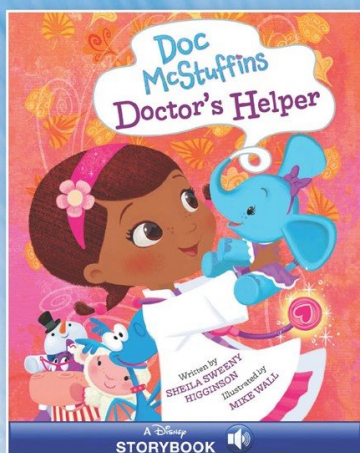
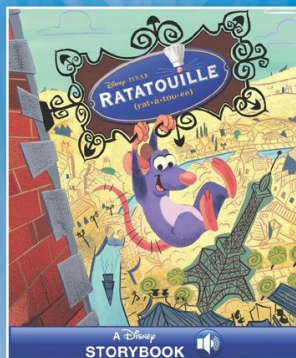
Belle and the Beast still had much to learn about one another. But their hearts were in the right place.



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